To:
Age Appropriate Design Code call for evidence
Engagement Department
Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire SK9 5AF
childrenandtheGDPR@ICO.org.uk

17 September 2018

Dear Ms Atkinson,

We welcome the opportunity to contribute to your consultation on the development of an Age-Appropriate Design Code.

Background and credentials

By way of context, SuperAwesome was founded in 2013 to build kid-safe tools and technology to enable the under-13 digital media ecosystem. We realised that with the rapidly increasing number of children going online a new set of tools were going to be required both for participants in the kids industry but also for companies who had to support children on 'family' platforms. Today, our 'kidtech' is used by hundreds of companies worldwide to enable safe and compliant (COPPA, GDPR) digital engagement with children.

SuperAwesome's customers operate in industries including toy, film, entertainment and video games. From our London headquarters, our team of 130+ employees - including more than 35 software engineers - are developing and deploying technology infrastructure built on our core principles of: *Privacy by Design*, and *Responsibility by Design*.

Our tools are used by content owners, advertising agencies and kids' brands to comply with children's data privacy rules and appropriate content standards around the world.

Technology Overview

All of our technology is certified as COPPA-compliant under the FTC's Safe Harbor programme, and was designed from the ground up to comply with GDPR by collecting as little data as possible.

Our advertising platform ***AwesomeAds***, enables the delivery of kid-safe advertising, fully compliant with COPPA (US) and GDPR (Europe), without the collection of any personal data. AwesomeAds serves hundreds of millions of kid-safe ad impressions monthly across the EU. Every advertisement AwesomeAds delivers is watermarked with our *SafeAd* logo, which signifies that the ad (1) is not collecting any personal data (including persistent identifiers), and (2) has been reviewed by a human for age appropriateness and compliance with the CAP Code.

In addition, our *Kidaware* education programme is used extensively by brands and agencies to train their employees in children's data privacy laws and advertising standards - we educated well over 200 UK digital media professionals in 2017 and 2018.

Our cloud-based development toolkit, ***Kids Web Services*** *(KWS)*, is used by kids' content creators, including Niantic (Pokemon Go) and Mattel, to handle compliant registration and authentication of users under 16 (or 13) around the world, including obtaining parental consent and verification of the parent's identity.

PopJam is our social content platform, enabling brand and content owners to safely engage children, without resorting to directing them into adult social environments such as Facebook or Instagram. PopJam is also a ParentZone Family Champion and for the past three years the PopJam team have worked with the UK Safer Internet Centre to celebrate Safer Internet Day across the platform.

Finally, we have been actively involved with the industry and regulators in developing and implementing digital child safety policies, including:

- Being active on the board of Mediasmart, where we contribute to the design and distribution of media literacy materials in schools.
- Participating in CAP Code consultations relating to kids, in particular the April 2017 guidance on labelling and disclosure of native advertising.
- Working closely with industry associations such as Toy Industries Europe (TIE), World Federation of Advertisers and the British Toy & Hobby Association (BTHA) to educate and advise their members on data privacy compliance.
- Submitting comments to the ICO's consultation on the *GDPR and Children* earlier this year, as well as to the Working Party 29 consultations on *Profiling and Automated Processing*, *Transparency and Consent*, among other topics.
- Consulting to UNICEF on its discussion paper, *Children and digital marketing: Rights, risks and responsibilities*, and the development (ongoing) of a toolkit to "help companies focus their efforts on concrete improvements to children's rights in the digital domain."
- Making available our executives to provide evidence and input to UK government deliberations on digital safety of children, led by [redacted] in the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS).

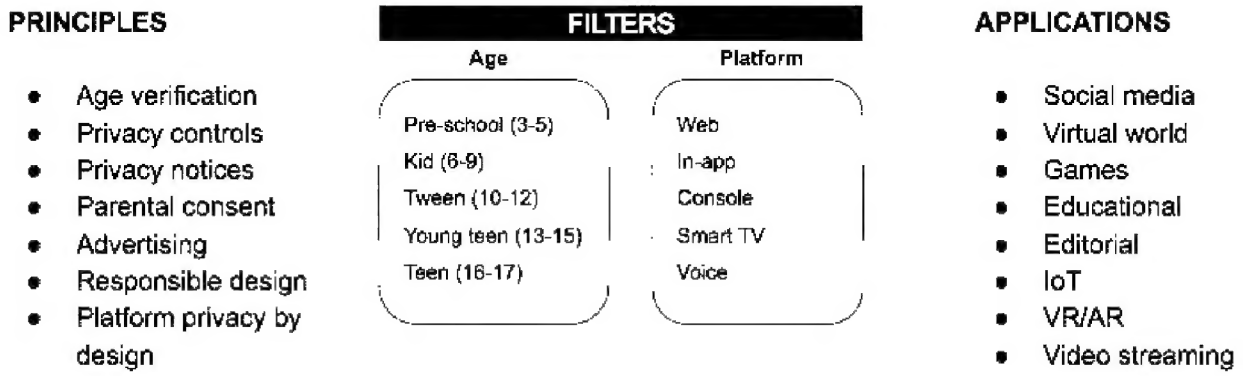
Our over 5 years' of experience in applying Privacy by Design principles to build kidtech gives us a unique insight into practical, technology-based solutions to the most difficult challenges in making the internet safer for kids.

Approach to the consultation

We have taken into account the topics the Government has recommended, and added categories that we believe impact kids' digital experiences and will also benefit from age-appropriate design considerations, such as advertising and 'platform privacy by design'. Note that we are not addressing all of the listed areas, but focusing our attention on those where our experience is most relevant. These include: age verification, data minimisation & compliant data collection (including parental consent), privacy notices, advertising and transparency, and age-appropriate responsible design.

Our contribution is structured into several key **Design Principles**, which we then illustrate in practice across a range of digital service types for kids (**Applications**), and comment on how implementation may vary depending on the filters of **Age** and **Platform**.

In order to ensure that the Age Appropriate Design Code remains useful over time, it is particularly important to extend its applicability to any internet-enabled platform such as Smart TVs, virtual reality environments and voice-activated services - where design considerations may differ significantly from traditional desktop web or mobile applications.



We thank you for the opportunity to contribute to this consultation and we stand by to assist with the Commissioner's future deliberations and initiatives regarding the protection of children's digital data privacy.

We hereby consent to the publication of personal data contained in this attached document.

Yours sincerely,

[redacted]

SuperAwesome